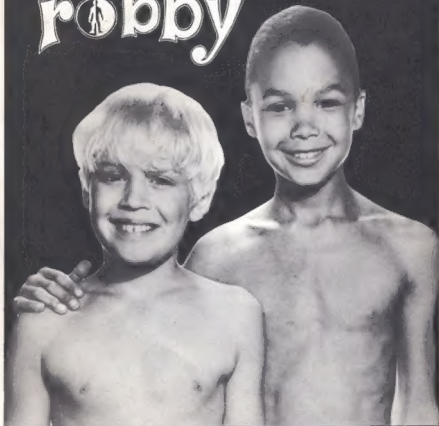
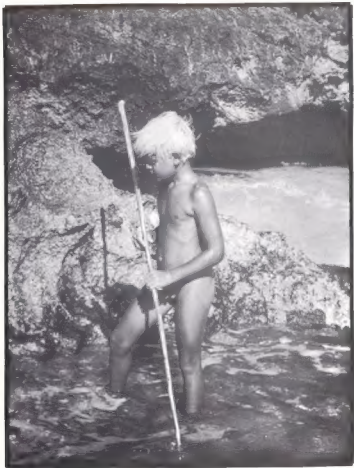


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PRESENTS

# robby









# ROBBY

## *The Arrival*

The storm had died, but Robby had not. The angry sea had calmed now as it pushed Robby's tiny boat out of the steel-gray dawn toward the island.

The dinghy came to a much deserved rest on shore, gently, as if it were making special effort not to wake its lone occupant. In the belly of the craft, which was half filled with water, lay Robby. The bright orange life jacket his mother had put on him was still fastened tightly and it had kept his head above the level of the salty sea water. His red and white striped shirt, cut-off blue jeans and grayish-white sneakers were soaked of course, but they seemed to cause the boy no discomfort as he remained uncon-

ous. High above soared a seagull, circling round and round, puzzling at the strange sight below. The bird abruptly relieved himself and the impact of the droppings on Robby's forehead woke him with a start.

"Yachhh . . ." muttered the lad as he wiped the salty substance from his sunburned face and flaxen hair. Jumping up from the boat he ran straight toward the waves which were lapping up on shore. He splashed water all over his head trying to clean the vile slime off. Satisfied that he had done all he could to cleanse himself, Robby mentally cursed the feathered creature with a word he'd heard his father use many times but that he, himself, dared not utter aloud. But the bird was long gone. There was only a gentle wind whispering through the palms and the waves washing up on the sand. And there was the island. It seemed huge, dense and imposing to Robby's deep blue eyes. But it was not beautiful like the sunny islands he had seen in the pictures his parents took on their photographic expeditions. The beach was littered with dried-up palm branches and decaying coconuts. Beyond the beach, the thick jungle was gnarled with vines and threatening with prickly vegetation. Lizards darted about and on one tree, Robby was sure he saw a snake.

"Mommy! Daddy! Where are you?" cried Robby racing down the beach. There was no sign of anyone. Though he cried out again and again, the only answer he received was from an occasional bird flying overhead. Robby turned his attention to the endless horizon, but there was no Red Herring, the whimsical name his father had given the family sailboat. He continued calling out, but the sound of the sea mocked his pitiful efforts. Momentarily discouraged, the boy turned away to contemplate the island once more. He spotted what appeared to be a clearing not too far up the beach from where he stood and, deciding that he must begin some sort of exploration sooner or later, he headed in that direction. As he entered the jungle, the first thing to arrest his attention was a most familiar sight. The remains of a camp-fire. It was long cold and the wind, the sand and time had made efforts to hide it. But it was unmistakable. Someone else had been here before him, Robby thought. Hope set his heart to fluttering, but as he started to look about him, his heart nearly stopped. In the tree above his head, grotesquely nestled in its crotch, was a human skull. Its jaw was agape and the birds and insects had picked it clean. Robby shrank in horror. Turning away to escape the hideous sight, he then noticed what seemed to be the skeletal remains of a human leg protruding from the sand. Another skull was partially buried and an assortment of bones lay strewn about. Terror gripped the boy as he ran screaming from the jungle back to the beach. His imagination raced even faster than his feet and the sounds of the jungle and the shrill cackle of birds of prey assailed the innermost recesses of his mind.

"Mommy! Mommy! Daddy! Help me! Help me!"

Robby's temples pounded, sweat poured down his face. Faster and faster he ran until his legs could no longer keep pace with his panic. He collapsed in a pathetic little heap, burying his face in his arms and surrendering to a flood of tears. Merciful nature then allowed him a child's release of falling asleep once more.

When Robby opened his eyes again, he found himself staring into another huge eye. But this one belonged to no human being. Anxiety seized him once again and he was on his feet with a single motion. He had been eyeball to eyeball with a giant sea turtle that had clumsily dragged itself up on the beach. Delight replaced Robby's dismay and the boy tried to mount the huge reptile in the hopes of taking a ride. But the creature paid the child little heed in spite of Robby's attempts to dig imaginary spurs into the solid, hard shell. As the boy dismounted, he noticed two ripe mangos lying in the sand next to the spot where he had lay sleeping.

"I don't remember seeing them before," Robby thought aloud. Surely he would have eaten them if he had. The terrible ordeal of the previous night and the events of this day thus far had given him little time to think of food. But his tummy was not so passive. He fell upon the fruit with a vengeance and devoured it with great relish. Mangos had not been his favorite food, but now nothing in his life had

tasted better.

Refreshed, Robby felt a new surge of energy charging through him. His clothing had dried but its salty clamminess and the heat of the tropical day made him aware of being uncomfortable. The surf rolling up on shore suggested an answer. He kicked the sneakers from his feet and peeled the shirt off his back, casting it indifferently aside as he galloped into the cool, revitalizing waves.

Though he was almost nine, Robby has never learned to swim. Perhaps it was because his parents were too often on assignment for magazines and he got so little time to spend with his father. And then their apartment in New York afforded few opportunities to go swimming. During those times he always stayed with his aunt who had a big house in Connecticut. Her idea of a marvelous afternoon for him was a visit to an art museum or tennis lessons at the country club. His uncle had often promised to have someone give him swimming instructions, but it never happened somehow. Robby always was restricted to the shallow end of a pool at lawn parties where he would wade, hoping someone would offer to teach him. But the other kids were having too much fun and the adults rarely paid any sort of attention to the children.

Robby got down on all fours and allowed the surf to rush up over him. It felt wonderful. He liked the ocean. The skill of swimming was not required to fully enjoy the waves. He knew enough to avoid going out too far as his mother and father had often cautioned him about the dangers of undertow. Again the foaming waters poured over his small body and he giggled with glee.

Suddenly his eye caught an unusual movement in the bushes beyond the beach. Who was it . . . or worse yet . . . what was it?

Cautiously, Robby crawled up onshore, like a Marine he recalled seeing in a war movie once. He peered up over the top of the sand dune, searching diligently for another sign of life. But everything was still. Only the palm branches swayed and the breeze gently ruffled the leaves on the seagrass. Though the afternoon sun was still quite warm, a chill ran through the boy as he wondered if someone or something was watching him as well.

Night finally brought an end to the longest day of Robby's life. Except for some monkeys, lizards and an infinite variety of tropical birds that he had spotted on a late afternoon climb up the island's highest peak, Robby was sure he was alone. And now it was dark. He had filled the bottom of his boat with palm branches in order that he might have some sort of bed to sleep on. The jungle had frightened him and he only felt safe under the stars on the beach. Though the boy was exhausted, sleep did not come readily. Every nocturnal sound captured his attention. A ferocious animal cry from deep inside the jungle caused him to curl up in a fetal position.

"Mommy . . . Daddy . . . please find me . . . please." Then, at last, Robby nodded and drifted off into a pleasant dream of home.



Robby awoke to a bright new day heralded by a gull swooping low over the waves in search of breakfast. In one graceful dive, the bird thrust his head into the surf and brought up a glimmering, silver fish which he carried high off into the clouds. Robby was hungry, too. Nevertheless he was both startled and suspicious at what he discovered at his feet in the boat. Placed there, almost as if for a table setting, were two more mangos, some strips of what resembled meat and an open coconut with the milk still in it. Such a feast here, in this place, looked suspiciously inviting to a boy who had eaten nothing but a couple of mangos and other bits of fruit he found in the last two days. He drained the sweet liquid the coconut provided and took a bite of the mango. But his civilized appetite was attracted by the strange looking meat. He picked up a morsel and sniffed it carefully. It smelled good. He touched his tongue to it. It seemed safe enough. He was sure hungry enough. Finally, he dared a tiny piece. It tasted good. He quickly gobbled up each piece and finished off the mangos. Then Robby faced up to the question he could not ignore. Who put it there? His eyes searched the beach and horizon. It even occurred to him to look for footprints in the sand. But there were none larger than his and so he surmised that they had to be his own. But that still did not answer the question. Who put it there? It must have been God. Yes, it was God. There was no other

answer. Robby muttered a quick prayer of thanks and dismissed the entire incident.

Having broken his fast and feeling adventurously fit, Robby set out to explore the vastness of the island. Not all of it was dense jungle. Choosing another beach route away from where his boat had landed, he found what looked like a path. Following it, he forded himself some high above the beach and entering into an enormous meadow with gigantic rocks rising above the waist high grass that waved in the breeze and resembled a glistening, green sea. It was a beautiful sight and Robby became a part of it, imagining himself a mighty whale floating through it.

Halfway through the meadow, Robby became aware of a strange sound in the distance. The farther into the field he penetrated the louder the mysterious noise grew. He could detect nothing about it other than the fact that it was constant and the closer he seemed to be getting to it the more thunderous it sounded. Having been raised in a city, Robby knew all sorts of mechanical sounds made by generators, trucks and electrical plants. But this was nothing like any of those. Could it be? His heart thumped fiercely in his chest. It had to be! Robby came out of the meadow and into a clump of tall trees. The sound now seemed almost deafening compared to the other areas of the quiet island he had visited. Yes, it was. Robby stopped in his tracks, resting against one of many boulders

that now surrounded him. A big, broad smile swept across his reddened face. A deep gorge lay just before him and pouring into it on the other side was a series of waterfalls feeding a placid pool at the bottom of the chasm.

There was fresh water on the island.

## ***The Savage***

Robby hadn't been this excited since Christmas. He carefully edged his way down into the crevice and enjoyed the coolness of the rocks and the subtle declining in the temperature of the air. It was beautiful and Robby thought that he would come and play here often until his parents came to get him. He could be a mountain climber or a prospector for gold or maybe even an astronaut on some forbidden planet. Yes . . . it would be great fun to play here.

At the bottom of the ravine, Robby discovered a granite shelf that stuck out over the pool. How inviting the water looked, but how deep it must be. He knelt down on the rock's edge and dipped his hand into the water to get a few drops that he might taste it. It tasted cool and sweet. As the ripples in the water dissipated, Robby could see his fluttering reflection. But when the pool was still once more, it mirrored a face other than his own. He turned in a flash and was so startled by the eyes that met his, he lost his precarious balance and fell into the dark water.

"Help . . . help," Robby cried out, "I can't swim . . . help!"

High above him, an equally surprised boy with charcoal colored skin stood up and dived into the pool. Robby continued splashing feverishly in a desperate effort to stay above the threatening water. But he disappeared below the surface before his rescuer could reach him. The dark skinned boy began treading water, searching frantically for the



white stranger. There was a sudden explosion of water again as Robby broke through the pool's grip for another gasp of breath. Instantly, the dark boy darted through the water toward the other. Robby sank again, but the other boy dived down and brought him back to the top. Robby was choking violently on the water he had swallowed and his benefactor struggled valiantly to pull him to safety. Robby's sense of survival enabled him to drag himself up on one of the rocks at the pool's edge where he coughed up what seemed like plants of water. He took no notice of the naked, dark skinned boy who had just saved his life, and was now watching over him with great concern.

Robby lay still for a time, regaining his strength and composure very gradually. Finally he dared to look up at the strange boy who had given him a second chance to live.

He was completely nude, a state of being that was all but totally alien to Robby's upbringing. While he looked to be about the same age and size, his skin was nearly as dark as some of the black people Robby had encountered in the city. Robby had seen some of his parents' photos of primitive natives before, but this is the first time he had come face to face with one. The boy had pleasant features, and his disarming smile made Robby feel a little more comfortable, though he was still somewhat afraid of him.

"Dear your mother know that you're out with no clothes on?" asked Robby.

The boy offered no answer other than his enchanting grin.

"My mother used to let me go bare when I was little," said Robby, "but I'm too big now. I'm almost . . . almost."

The conversation was wasted on the boy. He remained silent.

"Say . . . what's your name, anyway? My name's Robby."

Again there was no reply.

"You don't speak English, do you? Well . . . it's no matter. My Dad read me a story once about a guy on an island. He met this native there and he called him 'Friday' cuz it was Friday. He was just like you. I'll call you Friday, too. Robby . . . I'm Robby. Friday . . . you're Friday."

The boy just smiled broadly.

Later in the day, Robby had this most welcome companion to the beach and his boat. The idea of a boat seemed comprehensible to the native boy, but the design absolutely fascinated him.

"Hey . . . Friday, let's built a fort," suggested Robby.

Friday looked puzzled.

"You know . . . a fort. Here let me show you."

Robby picked up a stick from the beach and began to sketch out a drawing of a hut. Friday looked at it and seemed to understand immediately. He signaled for Robby to follow and the two boys scampered off into the jungle in search of building materials.



The youngsters gathered hefty branches that had fallen from the tall trees. In some cases, they snapped off their own by climbing out into the vey and of a limb to create sufficient strain. Using sizable enough rocks from the beach, the drove the stakes into the soft sand. Next they gathered up scores of dead palm branches that were lying about everywhere. Friday peeled off fresh palm leaves and used them to fasten the roof bracing together. This made Robby recall that there was some rope in the boat. He led his co-worker to the craft from which he dug out a long length of hemp. Friday seemed to recognize the rope and understand its use, all of which was evidenced by his big, boyish grin. The two lads returned to their construction site and Robby produced a jack knife from the pocket of his pants. Though it was full of sand and the first signs of rust were starting to take their toll, the blade flashed bright in the sun and instantly aroused Friday's curiosity. Robby cut the rope with the sharp blade. Friday just stood mesmerized by the instrument. Robby held it forth so that Friday might have a better look. The native boy touched the keen edge of the blade.

"Careful . . . don't cut yourself, Peli."

Friday appeared spellbound.

At last the lean-to was finished. Both boys stood back to admire their creation. Friday had adorned the ends of the roofing stakes with bright pink conch shells he gathered from the beach. The roof was heavily laden with many layers of palm branches to insure protection from tropical rains. The roof had a pitch to it and the sides were open to guarantee full benefit of the ocean breeze, for the nights here were usually as hot as the days. Robby and Friday exchanged smiles of satisfaction.



Suddenly, Friday turned toward the sea and gestured that Robby should follow. The young native plunged into the longwaiting surf and swam out for a short distance before again turning to beckon Robby to join him.

Robby stood onshore considering the invitation. There was no doubt that he would go in the water. It was a question of attire. He watched the naked native boy bobbing about and then he looked down at his cut-offs. Should he or shouldn't he? Why not? He undid his shorts and slipped out of them with ease before charging down to the water, too. His alabaster buttocks contrasted so sharply with his tanned back and legs that he looked as if he were wearing a white bathing suit.

Friday was delighted with Robby's abandon. He started swimming away from him, hoping that Robby would follow.

"But I can't swim," Robby shouted over the waves.

Friday cocked his head to one side.

"I can't swim," Robby repeated.

Again Friday motioned to him.

It then occurred to Robby to illustrate his point with sign language. He made a swimming motion, pointed to himself while shaking his head and then gestured by ducking his head under water and coming up again to feign a cough.



Remembering the previous day, Friday quickly grasped his meaning. He swam back to Robby's side and held his arms out at water level, gesturing with his head that Robby should try laying across them. This Robby understood and he anxiously followed the implied instructions. With the support of Friday, Robby flipped and flailed about in the water. But everytime Friday would withdraw his arms, Robby would do dives like a rock. Friday continually demonstrated the simplest stroke, but for Robby, it wasn't so simple.

Robby swallowed a lot of sea water that day and his lily white bottom had turned lobster red, but before the sun had set, he finally managed to keep himself afloat for a few wonderful moments. The someone he had waited all his life to have touch him had, at long last, come.





# The Friends

It was the most wonderful day of Robby's life. It seemed strange to him somehow that such a day should happen here, on a remote island in a part of the world he could not even name. His mother was not here, but was his father. He had missed them terribly, and he was about always to see them again and tell them about Friday and about how he had learned to swim. But all the excitement of swimming at last and the fact of having a friend, made his former depression vanish without so much as a trace of a tear. Robby would have felt guilty about all of this normally, but he was simply having too much fun. He would let nothing spoil it.

After the boys had come out of the water and allowed the tropical sun to dry their bodies, Robby put on his shorts again. He was about to don his shirt too when Friday suddenly looked very odd to him. Realizing that the constant temperature even at night, precluded the necessity of such a garment, Robby produced the knife from inside his pocket once more. He carefully cut the threads along the seams of the brightly striped shirt and opened it out in a single length of material. Turning around toward the jungle beyond the beach area, Robby ran to some vine he saw dangling from a tree. He slipped through a particularly thorny vine with his hands and quickly brought it back to the spot where Friday stood waiting with a most curious expression on his face. Robby then grabbed the fabric and drew it up between the tips of his new companions, securing it around his waist with the vine. Robby then backed off to admire his crude, but effective job of clothing.

"There. You taught me to swim. I made you a pair of pants."

Friday's smile indicated a gratitude that required no words. If Robby had been glad to find Friday, it was more than clear that Friday was even happier about finding Robby.

Friday suddenly seized Robby by the arm and made it obvious that he wanted to lead him off somewhere. Complete trust coming early at that age, Robby followed without any hesitation. Friday cheerfully guided his partner through a well-worn path across a log that forded a stream and far into the jungle. The tops of the trees harbored all sorts of inhabitants, from playful monkeys to cockatoots and parrots. The lower limbs and roots offered refuge for various lizards, both large and small, and an infinite variety of brightly hued lizards. Robby marvelled at all he saw and which Friday took quite for granted.

Finally, the path led down into a valley clearing at the foot of the island's highest peak. To Robby's amazement, a stately, very solidly constructed grass hut stood inside a bamboo fence compound. Friday led him over the tiny fence and it was clear even to Robby that this was where Friday lived. Inside the dwelling, a huge assortment of fresh fruit and coconuts lay. And crouching on a piece of log, lay some of the most blue substance that Robby had found in his boat the morning before. On the floor of the hut, large fat slabs covered every inch of earth so as to resemble a Patchwork carpet. It felt soft and cool under Robby's bare feet.

"What a neat house," said Robby, his eyes still wide with wonder.

Then Friday withdrew what resembled a knife from the space between the wood slats forming of the wall and the palm leaves and grass that thatched it. It was a hand-fashioned dagger, crudely yet ingeniously carved out of wood. Its handle featured the image of a face not unlike some of the primitive carvings Robby's parents had brought home to him from their travels. It was beautiful in Robby's eyes. Probably even more so than his own sharp pocket knife had appeared to Friday.

"You couldn't have done all this yourself. Where's your mother and father?" inquired Robby.

Friday made no comment as was to be expected. Robby was becoming quite frustrated by his inability to make himself understood to his new friend.



"Crren Friday. If we re gonna be friends, you've got to learn English," Robby said decisively. He had his friend sit down on the floor of the hut next to the cache of fruit. Robby picked up a large, ripe piece and held it forth to Friday.

"Food... this is food. Food."

Friday just stared at him as usual.

"Food... Friday... food."

Friday parted his lips as if he were about to utter a sound. Robby quickly nodded as if to urge him on.

"Food, Friday... food... food."

"Fud... Friday... fud," the boy intoned.

"Right! Food... food!" said Robby, smiling with great accomplishment.

"Fud... fud..."

"Fooooo... fooooo," intoned Robby.

"Fooooo... fooooo," Friday finally managed.

Robby enthusiastically pressed on. He brought the fruit to his mouth and bit a large chunk out of it.

"Eat... eat," Robby said, pointing to the activity of his mouth.

"Eat." This word Friday spoke without difficulty.

"Right? Eat food, eat food?"

Friday took the piece of fruit from Robby and bit into it. and

\*E.A. "strated Friday

"Fast food," offered Hobbie

"Eat food," recalled Friday. "Friday eat food."

Robby burst into a huge grin. What a day this had been.

And so the days went by one after another. For Robby it was the paradise he had imagined when his father had read him *Peter Pan* and *Tom Sawyer*. His swimming improved with each day. Friday's vocabulary broadened simultaneously.

One day Robby decided to teach Friday the game of Cowboys and Indians. Putting a small palm twig from a tree Robby fashioned what he chose to think of as a feather. He handed this to Friday's head with a vision and, in view of the color of Friday's skin and the bright blue cloth that had once been Robby's shirt Friday was pure Indian. Robby then formed a crooked branch and with the aid of his indispensable pocketknife he carved out a rustic rifle. He then induced Friday to run down the bench whooping and hollering. This Friday understood with no trouble whatsoever. Robby pursued him with great ferocious deadly blasting away with his imaginary weapon.

"I am you, Friday," shouted Robby

But Friday just concluded his flight of fancy

"I shot you lay down!"

But Friday test kept running:

Finally Robby went until Friday returned to him and then suggested that they switch roles. Robby dressed the "feather" and Friday took the rifle. Friday seemed to like that idea, too. So down the beach Robby ran at full speed whooping and hollering with the same gusto as Friday had displayed. Friday charged after him, bellowing out "bang bang" as loud as he could. Robby suddenly lurched, signifying the full effect of being shot. He dramatically sunk to his knees and fell forward on his face in the very best spaghetti western tradition.

"Robby" cried Friday in sheer horror. He moved to his fallen companion's side as if he feared the worst. His eyes filled with fear. Friday angrily turned Robby over on his back.

Robby opened his own eyes and then glared directly up into Friday's troubled face.

"Oh, Friday. Even when I'm the Indian, you have to proof it up!"

The days turned into weeks and the boys divided their time between Friday's hot inland and the sea to they both had constructed on the beach. It was an ideal arrangement Robby thought. The change helped keep tribism from taking over.

Robby awoke one gray morning after an overnight monsoon. Friday still lay fast asleep on the palm branch mat beside him. Robby looked out toward the vast ocean and began to recall the morning of his arrival. The waves thrashed the rocks out beyond the jetty and the dying wind in the trees seemed to be calling his name. Robby suddenly felt very real, anchored, a feeling he had wanted right along until this very moment.

\* a faint voice seemed to be calling.

Hobbes cracked his head to one side and got to his feet.

<sup>a</sup> H<sub>2</sub>O:EtOH = 1:1.

Was it his mother's voice?

"Robbbbee" the Siren-like song continued.

Robby walked out onto the beach. The wind blew his thick, fleece of golden hair straight back over his ears.

The voice persisted. Robby decided to follow it out to the sea. He made his way down the beach and started to climb the rocks that led out onto the natural jetty that reached way out into the turbulent sea away from the beach hut.

It all came vividly back to him.

This vacation had been the most wonderful Robby had ever had. He had dreamed all his life of going off with his parents to the strange lands he had heard them speak of so often. Now it had come to pass. He had flown with them to a distant land where the language was foreign to him. He had sailed with them on the Red Herring, the sailboat his father kept in the West Indies for just such excursions. His parents were not on assignment this time. This trip was just for Robby.

Everywhere Robby and his parents stopped, the friendly people of the different islands would make such a fuss over this boy with the golden hair and the light blue eyes. Robby could not understand why he seemed so unusual to them, but he did enjoy all the attention.

But it was all coming to a close now and Robby dreaded the return to the dull routine of city life. There was no freedom there. It was an endless exercise in don't do this and you can't do that. And nothing ever changed there. Just the noise and the traffic and the constant fear of strangers. Robby wished with all his heart that he and his folks could just stay on the Red Herring forever. He'd often heard his mother and father dream of the same thing. He never could comprehend why they just didn't.

There were three days left on the trip. His father was due back home for assignment, which meant he would be going off again for a long period. His mother would not be accompanying him this time and so Robby was most thankful for that small favor. After a supper of fish they had all caught themselves, Robby and his family were fast asleep. The radio below deck warned of a sudden storm that would be a dangerous threat to small craft, but the warning fell on slumbering ears.

As the sea began to roll and tom threateningly, Robby's father awakened. An experienced sailor, he knew better than to allow himself to get caught in such a predicament. But it had happened and now he had to try to rectify it.

He jumped into action and immediately weighed anchor, hoping that he might still make the barely visible shore before the storm engulfed them completely. Robby was, by nature, a heavy sleeper and though his eyes were now open with the commotion onboard, he was not fully aware of what was actually going on. Though the sails were down, the howling wind had caught them and Robby's father struggled desperately to pull them in to secure them. Visibility was nearly zero now and he knew he had lost control as the boat listed wildly to starboard and was being carried in the direction of the rocks. Robby's parents started talking about abandoning the boat. His mother came to him and quickly tied him into one of the life preservers below deck. It had been a calm day before this and very hot, and so his parents had permitted him to take it off for awhile while he napped.

Robby's father frantically set the dinghy afloat off the back of the big boat, and his mother scooped him up in her arms and carried him to the smaller one. There was a loud creaking sound, which even the wind and the raging sea could not muffle. Water seemed to be pouring in everywhere and Robby heard his dad say that they were breaking up. The little boy was terrified.

"Mommy. Daddy get in. . . get in. . .", he cried in panic.

"Robby's in the boat," his mother shouted, "now you come, too."

"Never mind me get in the boat with him!" replied his father.

But the fury of the storm would not subside its fury so easily. The men leached rope that held the dinghy so the mass craft had tipped severely and finally tilted.

"The rope broke the boat is getting away" screamed Robby's mother.

Robby pressed himself down in the floor of the dinghy for fear of being thrown overboard and he cried fearfully as the tiny craft bounced up and down in the waves. Through the angry mistiest he thought he heard his father say "We're on the rocks" with it. And then for the longest time there was only the wind and the sea and then nothing.

Robby stood at the end of the pier staring out toward the endless horizon. The voice had ceased to call him, and for the first time since he had met Friday he was all alone.

The moments of melancholy were incredibly few. Friday became aware of his friend's infrequent despair, and did all he could to divert him from it. The sunny days on the island often made it easy to forget. Robby was becoming more and more adjusted to this idyllic way of life.

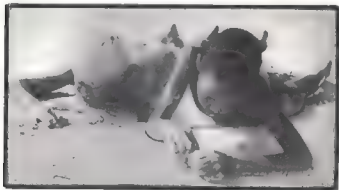
The boys reverted to going nude practically all of the time now. They only dressed when playing particular games or climbing trees. Robby no longer sported a trace of a bathing suit mark, and his entire body turned to almost the same skin tone of Friday. His hair was thickly matted and bleached almost snow white from the relentless sun.

There was not a square inch of the island that Robby had not seen on Friday's guided tours by now. They especially liked to play down at the foot of the cliffs where the ocean always offered a cool, refreshing mist as a result of its eternal assault on the rocks. But every now and again Robby would hear the haunting voice calling to him from the sea.

One day after their regular mid-day swim, Robby and Friday threw themselves down in the sand to dry.

"I've been on this island for weeks, Friday maybe even months. I've lost track."

"Yes many many days", Friday concluded.







"I don't know if Mommy and Daddy are ever going to find me."

"Friday mother die long time ago after we come here Friday live Robby live" offered Friday

"Does't you miss her?" asked Robby

"I talk to her sometimes in night like you say you mother talks to you She here ... you mother here You father here We here."

"Maybe they went to see God," said Robby

"God what is god?" questioned Friday

"He's the person up there who made the whole world and all of us," replied Robby

Friday pondered on Robby's words for a moment and decided that he did not want to prompt him into giving him one of his long lectures while his stomach was so empty

"Come Robby eat Friday eat" said Friday leaping up from the sand. The idea appealed to Robby too and both boys ran off up the beach

After returning to the hut to put on their pants for tree climbing, they set out to find the biggest mango tree on the island. Not only would they have lunch but the supply at the hut was lower than it should be and it was time to harvest as well

Like all of their tasks, the two boys made a game of this one too. To test their impending manhood, each would try to see how far out on a limb he dared go before it would break. This frequently resulted in bumps and bruises and always a good many hearty laughs. Friday climbed to the highest point possible and began to shake the tree to bring down as many pieces of fruit as he could. This, too, was something of a contest. There was really no such thing as work on their island. Robby stood under the tree dodging the various pieces of fruit and scored points for Friday everytime he succeeded in beaning Robby with one.

"Okay Friday that's enough. We'll never be able to carry all these back," suggested Robby. He began to scamper about picking up the pieces as they rolled down the hill below the tree. Several pieces rolled off course into the tall grass. Robby searched each one out. But as all young boys will, he failed to look before he reached

"Owww, Friday, I think something bit me," cried Robby

In a flash, Friday climbed down and jumped out of the tree. He ran to Robby's side and quickly examined the small wound on his hand. Friday's eyes widened in dread as he scanned the immediate area for the perpetrator of the bite. He finally caught glimpse of a large, brownish snake slithering off into the higher grass.

"Carabunta!" exclaimed Friday

"What is care care... what you said?" quizzed Robby

Pointing out the venomous serpent, Friday repeated, "Carabunta!"

"A snake bit me a snake bit me? I'm gonna die! I'm gonna die!"

Friday seized the wounded hand and brought it to his mouth to suck out the poison.

"No talk!", he warned Robby "No talk!"

That night back at Friday's large hut, Robby lay delirious, running a raging fever and calling out again and again for his mother. Friday never left his side as he sat mixing a potion of leaves and roots with which he treated the wound. His eyes were filled with tears and his heart was filled with fear that this friend for whom he had waited so long might now slip away from him!



Friday had kept an all-night vigil over his friend. He had dared not close his eyes, for visions of the ugly serpent that had caused Robby such pain slithered through his mind. Although sleep battled for control of Friday, a deep sense of grave concern kept it in check.

Robby slept fitfully, his head tossing from side to side. His face dripped with perspiration and Friday had to keep pulling the fur skin up over him, lest he catch a chill and add to his woes.

By morning there seemed to be little change. Friday feared the worst. In almost unbearable despair, he walked out into the early light of dawn and silently contemplated the God Robby had spoken of, beseeching him to make the boy well again. Friday could not imagine a life without Robby anymore and he fantasized about his stricken comrade, hearing his voice calling over and over "Fri . . . Friday . . ."

A tear streamed down Friday's cheek.

"Fri . . . I'm hungry, Fri . . ."

But the voice was not coming from within Friday's imagination. It was coming from the hut. Friday's heart nearly burst with anticipation as he whirled around and ran back into the dwelling.

There, sitting upright in an ever so feeble position, was Robby, his eyes only half open.

"I'm hungry, Fri . . . let's eat."

It only took a couple of days for Robby to regain his original boyish strength. In virtually no time at all he was back on the beach, diving through the waves after Friday and chasing him through the jungle in never-ending games of hide and seek.

Robby attributed the saving of his life to Friday, but the small native boy gave all the credit to Robby's God, about whom Friday wanted to learn more and more now.

## ***The Intruder***

Many more weeks passed and Robby had come to the subconscious conclusion that he would probably be spending the rest of his life here on this island. It provided his every need. The sea and trees provided food, the shelter was quite comfortable and clothing was now completely un-

necessary. He had come to love the tropical paradise as home and the thought of forever living here was not so awful, although he still longed to see his parents again and feel their loving embrace. In their absence he came to consider Friday his brother and this thought fulfilled Robby's only remaining need.

Late one night, Friday awoke with a start, his senses as sharply attuned to the atmosphere as a watch dog. Above the sound of the waves lapping up on the moonlit shore and the crickets in the jungle, Friday heard an alien sound. Another human voice. He sat up abruptly, inadvertently waking Robby.

"What is it, Fri . . . ?"

"No talk . . . listen . . ."

"I don't hear anything . . ."

"Listen . . ."

The two boys concentrated intently, their eyes darting about outside the beach lean-to where they had elected to spend this particularly hot night. There was a voice in the distance. Maybe more than one. But the language could not be detected above the nocturnal sounds of the beach and jungle.

Robby jumped up suddenly, his excitement at fever pitch. He grabbed his pants from off the support post of the thatched roof. Slipping into them for the very first time in weeks, he blurted out:

"Maybe it's my Dad . . . maybe he's come back to get me!"

But Friday was much more cautious. Seizing Robby by the arm to arrest his attention, he warned:

"Men come many time . . . bring other men  
EAT other men! Friday see!"

Robby's eyes bulged in terror as the image of the skulls and bones he saw the day he arrived on the island now flashed back through his mind.

Friday got to his feet in order to take the lead. He saw no reason to imitate Robby's formality of dressing. Instead he made gradual tracks out onto the silvery sand with Robby right behind him.

"Slow . . . we go very slow . . ."

The nearer the boys drew to the sound of the voice, the clearer it became until it was apparent

that the language was English. Robby was first to recognize this, of course. But the voice was not that of his father. As it grew louder and louder, the boys reduced their pace more cautiously.

"Do cannibals speak English, Fri?"

"No talk . . . listen . . ."

Finally the two youngsters stopped behind a large rock formation against which the surf periodically pounded. The voice now sounded like it was coming from the other side. Taking great precaution, the boys climbed up on the rock and peered over the top to see who it was that had ventured onto their island.

The bright moonbeams generously illuminated a lone figure. It was impossible for the boys to guess his age because he had a scruffy beard and moustache and his hair was longer than it ought to have been. He appeared rather ragged and Robby noted that at least one of his toes was poking through his sneaker. In his tightly clenched fist he held a bottle that was nearly empty. If the sun had been shining, Robby would have managed to read the label which advertised a rather inferior brand of rum.

The man staggered about, mumbling disjointed sentences that were decidedly English, but made little sense at all . . . at least to the two boys.

"Leave me alone Fitzgibbon . . . I buried you along with that name a long time ago . . .", he slurred, lumbering out toward the water. He fell to his knees and then pitched forward, face down, into the surf.

When the man did not seem to move again, Robby and Friday gradually mustered up the courage to examine the intruder at a closer range. From behind the rock they walked slowly up to his rumpled form, over which the seafoam continued to pour. Was he dead?

"He's still breathing, Friday . . . I can see his stomach going up and down . . ."

Friday immediately grabbed the man's arms and motioned that Robby should do the same with his legs.

"Come . . . big waters come soon . . ."

"The tide, Fri," corrected Robby, as he had done so often before, "Big water is the tide."



The two small boys labored profusely to haul the unconscious man's limp body out from the path of threatening sea, where he would have surely perished.

The brilliant morning sun beat down on the little beach hut and partly fell upon the man who lay asleep beneath it. The boys were not there, but the loud buzz of insects and the chirping of tropical birds made up for the noise the two might have otherwise caused. The man stirred, his fingers taking a swipe at a fly that had used his rather

bulbous nose for a landing pad. The tiny pest continued to explore the wonder of the bearded face which seemed to be annoying its owner no end. The insect finally abandoned his search and the man rolled over on his back. Slowly, with just a flutter at first, he attempted to open his eyes. The lids finally parted sufficiently to reveal two pitifully bloodshot orbs that were obviously not ready for the new day.

The man made a rather comical attempt to get to his feet, but not before bumping his head on one of Friday's decorative conch shells perched on

a roof support. Quite naturally he did not know what to make of his previous night's sleeping quarters. He sported the faded blue jeans shorts belonging to Robby. Holding them up to his own waist he ascertained that they could not possibly be his. A spell of dizziness convulsed him for a moment. Regaining his semi-composure, he waddled rather humorously down toward the gentle surf to wash up.

How good the cool water felt as he washed away the sweat and sand from his face and neck. He wondered if there was any chance that there might be a drop or two left in his canteen somewhere down the beach.

He probably would have gone to find out had he not heard the laughing voices of children just beyond the rocks further up from where he stood. He decided to follow them to their origin.



Robby and Friday busied themselves on the jetty where they found the spearfishing to be especially productive. Friday had carved two extremely sharp specks that did the job very well.

The man sat down, being careful to remain unobtrusive to the two little, naked sprites who utterly charmed him. He might have thought all this a dream. If his head weren't splitting with his familiar hangover headache.

Robby was perched on a low rock shelf above the water's edge, his eyes scanning the water carefully for a fish large enough to take the thrust of his spear.

"I think I see one. Fril!"

Friday, who was already standing in the water, looked up as if to signal approval.

"Hey, don't let him get away!" the man cried out from his vantage point.

The strange voice caught Robby by surprise and, while turning to discover where it came from, he lost his balance and plummeted into the water.

"Sorry," the man offered, his smile betraying a lack of conviction. "I was looking forward to a little breakfast, too."

"It's alright," declared Robby as he wiped the foam from his eyes. He waded over to the ledge once again and produced a string of fish the two boys had already caught. "We got enough for breakfast anyway."

As the fire crackled and the fish roasted to a golden brown, the man explained that his name



was Horton Crandell, a writer of sorts—or at least he had been. He didn't bother making that point especially clear to the boys. He explained that he had a sailboat at the far end of the island which had run aground with the low tide.

Robby, in turn, related the story of his own arrival on the island which seemed to come as no surprise to Crandell.

"We read a lot of your father's work in National Geographic and Travel Magazine," admitted Crandell.

"Who's Fitzgibbon?" asked Robby.

"Fitzgibbon?"

"You kept talking to someone named Fitzgibbon last night," suggested Robby.

"Oh, he's somebody I thought I knew once," replied Crandell, not wanting to go into an elabor-

ate description of why he no longer used his real name, Fitzgibbon. "How did you come to be on this island, Friday?" inquired Crandell.

Robby chose to answer for him as Friday behaved very shyly around the stranger.

"He told me his mother brought him here when he was very little. She died, though," said Robby, she's in a cave over that way.

"Did you see where she was buried?" asked Crandell.

"No. I wanted to take me there once, but I was too scared," confessed Robby.

When the threesome had finished their hearty meal, it was decided that the sea looked far too inviting to be ignored. After a refreshing swim, the boys anxiously took Crandell on a tour of their island. They showed him everything they thought





worth seeing, including the hut that Friday's mother had built. With Friday's help, Robby told of the whole snake incident. Crandall was genuinely impressed with the perseverance and determination of the youngsters.

After hiking for more than an hour or so, the trio stopped to rest atop the cliffs high above the ocean. Crandall took off his sneaker and emptied the sand from it.

"It's incredible . . . incredible," he said softly.

"What's incredible?" asked Robby.

"Incredible? Incredible means unbelievable," offered Crandall.

"Oh. What's unbelievable?" questioned Robby.

"This whole thing. The two of you here alone . . . surviving against all odds . . . while people back home . . . with all the creature comforts in the world . . . can't even get along."

There was a long moment of silence as Robby debated about asking the question to which he dreaded the probable answer.

"Mommy and Daddy are never coming back for me, are they?" Robby said in a tiny, almost pathetic voice.

Crandall was momentarily caught off guard by the boy's sudden candor. He looked up at him squarely and decided that the truth was all that would do.

"No, Robby. They aren't."

Robby turned his head away for a brief moment while the final reality burned in deep. He quickly tried to regain his self-control in order to avoid tears which he promised himself would not escape.

"Did they go to Heaven?" he asked meekly.

"Yes . . . I'm sure they did," comforted the compassionate man.

Robby rose to his feet and walked forward from his two companions. His head bowed, a persistent tear got the better of him.

Crandall decided to rescue the boy from his grief. He got up and walked directly to him, turning him around and running his hand through the boy's thick, white hair.

"Hey . . . you know you have an aunt back home in the States who's worried sick about you. I read about it in the papers. Don't you think we'd better let her know you're okay?"

A thrill went through Robby at the mention of home.

"Are you going to take us back," he asked enthusiastically.

"Do you really want to go back," asked Crandall incredulously.

"Yes! Yes! Can Friday come, too!"

"Well . . . you don't think we're going to leave him here alone again, do you?" mused Crandall.

"Did you hear that, Fri? You're coming back to America with me. It's neat there with airplanes and ice cream and skateboards and everything!" Robby declared.

The day that would see Robby leave the island was not at all like the one that brought him there. The sky was a beautiful, clear blue, with only tiny cotton puffs of clouds. The blue and green sea was calm and resembled highly polished glass.

Crandall led the boys to the far end of the beach where his tired sailboat still lay peacefully at anchor. The thought of riding in the craft delighted the lads as they first waded and then swam the rest of the way to the boat which the high tide had now freed from its captivity.

Once aboard, Robby and Friday assisted in weighing anchor and Crandall hoisted the sails high to catch what little wind there was. But the trio was in no special hurry, least of all Crandall. And as the vessel began to glide smoothly over the turquoise, crystal clear water toward the nearest port that would serve as a gateway back to civilization, Crandall was quietly troubled. He could not help but question his own judgement about taking them away from their orderly paradise. Could a world that had gone so far awry in handling its own affairs keep from corrupting the innocence and honesty of these small children? Would a society steeped in paranoia and disillusionment recognize and appreciate the special relationship



that these two unique kids had nourished and derived such great reward from? Crandall turned his eyes from the uncertainty of the far horizon, back to the pleasant reality of his two young passengers.

No such thoughts troubled Robby and Friday. Their faces were aglow with excitement as they exchanged glances and then returned their attention to the wondrous, boundless sea that lay before them, whose beauty was as eternal as their friendship.



**THE END**



Director Ralph C. Blumke discusses his script with actors Ryp Siani, Warren Rasm and John Garces.

# ROBBY

I first conceived the idea of making a film of the Robinson Crusoe legend as a brotherhood story in 1960 long before anybody outside of Los Angeles had heard of a place called Wallis. I was nineteen years old and a teller in

a bank and such a possibility seemed as remote as universal brotherhood itself. But I was never one to be afraid to dream.

Seven years later I found myself on a volcanic sliver of an island in the Caribbean called Vieques. The

relatively few natives there had seen motion picture cameras only once before five years earlier when "Lord of the Flies" was filmed on the same location.

There are a great many stories about the making of the movie. There always are. But the ones that would be of specific interest to the readers of this publication involve our use of nudity in the film. On

this tenth anniversary, almost to the day, of the making of the movie the subject of nudity in film seems to be of little interest to anyone. It was no small consideration in those days, as it turned out.

After an extensive search for the right boys to play the difficult and demanding roles of Robby and Friday we settled on Warren Rasm aged nine and Ryp Siani who was ten. Ryp was a



Unlike many of Hollywood's actors, Warren Raum delighted in doing his required nude scenes and often romped on the beach in the buff even when not on camera.

professional, who had done T.V. commercials and was from a show biz family. Once we saw him, we knew we had Friday.

Robby was another matter entirely. Screen tests were required and after seeing hundreds of boys, Warren appealed to us the most.

The script called for a certain amount of nudity because it seemed natural to the atmosphere of the story. No one connected with the film was a nudist and so we gave the matter

little consideration, especially in view of the fact that both the two boys and their parents consented to the nude scenes without the slightest bit of persuasion.

I never thought that having the boys appear nude in the film would cause any concern whatsoever until the cinematographer, Al Moxell, questioned me as to "how far I wanted to go" in showing the boys' bodies.

"Just film them as if they had clothes on," I said, wanting the movie to look

as natural as possible.

"Okay, but nudity is a no-no," he warned.

"Who's going to object to a couple of kids . . . especially under these circumstances?" Besides, "Lord of the Flies" used nude boys, some even older than ours," I suggested.

When it came time to strip to the buff for the first time, Warren and Ryp thought nothing of it at all. In fact, they spent the first day on the beach completely

naked. A Puerto Rican was definitely to be taken lightly . . . that is in small doses. Both boys suffered with severely sunburned bottoms that required lots of Solanise and sympathy.

But the kids soon adjusted to the sun and before long, they were daffily tanned from head to toe.

I said more of us were nudists earlier, but I must confess that the whole crew delighted in skinny dipping with the kids during lunch



A hot day's shooting on the beach in Vieques Island, where "Lord of the Flies" was also filmed, builds a powerful thirst. Actor John García offers cool refreshment to fellow actor Warren Raum.

periods and whenever the heat caused us to take a break.

When the film was completed and ready for distribution in 1963, we painfully discovered that Mosell's warning about the audacity should have been

given more careful consideration. Although a few major distributors gave serious thought to accepting the film, all of them wound up rejecting it on the basis of the nudity. Though some were offended . . . indeed they applauded its

tactful use and felt it was indeed valid and necessary to the mood of the story . . . all feared problems with the potential audience.

Undaunted, we raised additional capital and opened the film in New York on Broadway in August, acting

as our own distributor.

The critical reaction was mixed. Several "black" movies were already playing in the wake of all the civil rights violence. "Rehdy" was accused by some of being naive in its gentle presentation. Others, how-



Relaxing between camera setups, Warren shares a joke with assistant director, Jeff Mullin, on a location in Puerto Rico.



Warren clown for the camera with a neighbor at his summer home in Massachusetts.

ever were more tolerant and very kind. One network radio critic called it "a little masterpiece" and recommended it without reservation to parents and children alike. The New York Times, Parents Magazine and several of the trade publications were particularly kind to me for my work as director and to the boys, who Variety said "could put precocious Hollywood child actors to shame."

Interest in kids on film, other than in those made by Walt Disney, is very slight. It needed the push of a major distributor and, although we proved in subsequent engagements that

the nudity had no adverse effect on either the kids or adults in the audience, it still prevented our getting it properly marketed.

As a film maker, I feel nudity has just as much of a place in movies as an auto chase, a romantic kiss or a hearty laugh. None of these should be used unless they are necessary to the story either.

If I had it to do over again, would I have had the boys do the nude scenes? Yes, it was an important, integral part of the story as everyone of the rejecting distributors agreed. Today the nudity wouldn't be the question. The real bone of

contention is whether or not children are considered to be people worthy of

more than obligatory, parental interest.

Award  Films



# AWARD FILMS presents

# robby

**A Lost Classic Rediscovered**

Enchanting! Using the Robinson Crusoe legend as a basis, Blumkin has interestingly made his Crusoe an eight-year-old boy, while his Friday is a handsome native youth. The two boys, without the hint of bigotry to corrupt their innocence, romp naked on the beach, hunt, fish and play cowboys and Indians, untouched, unspoiled and uninhibited in their idyllic ramblings.

Warren Baum, his hair bleached a symbolic snow white, is a little charmer as Robby, and Ryp Siani, with his disarming smile, is absolutely perfect as Friday. The photography is very good, and the soft color is well suited to the lush Puerto Rican island of Vieques, where "Lord of the Flies" had been photographed five years before. A heartwarming masterpiece, and a cogent lesson in tolerance and brotherhood!

— Bob Selmgall  
WEEK, New York City

Stunning! — **MORNING TELEGRAM**

Charming! — **NEW YORK MAGAZINE**

Engrossing entertainment!  
— **BOOKOFFICE MAGAZINE**

Warren Baum as Robby and Ryp Siani as Friday could put precocious Hollywood child actors to shame!

— **VARIETY**

Among the best movies of the year! Director Blumkin has succeeded admirably well in creating a thoughtful, artistic parable that is both heartwarming and timeless. The superlative color photography is clear and precise in each scene. Robby is played very well by young Warren Baum, and Ryp Siani displays some of the best acting a child has ever done on the screen!

— **COM-COLLEAGUE NEWS**

Sincerity sits on it like a halo! This is a graceful little drama, purposeful in content, perceptive in tone, well photographed in fine color and aptly laced with a lush musical score by a remarkable new composer, Christopher Young. Rates solid endorsement!

— **Howard Thompson, NEW YORK TIMES**

AWARD FILMS PRESENTS  
A BLUMKIN FILMS PRODUCTION

**robby**

STARRING WARREN BAUM RYP SIANI JOHN GARCES

MUSIC BY CHRISTOPHER YOUNG PRODUCTION DESIGNER AL MIZELL

PRODUCED BY STACY EINHART & RALPH C. BLUMKIN WRITTEN BY RALPH C. BLUMKIN

DIRECTED BY RALPH C. BLUMKIN

COLOR 88 MINUTES



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